The twin peaks of Mount Ainslie and Mount Majura are two of a number of hills, associated bushland areas and open space known collectively as the Canberra Nature Park. The ACT Conservation Service, Department of the Capital Territory manages the Canberra Nature Park as part of a system of nature reserves in the ACT and Jervis Bay Territory. The Canberra Nature Park provides a range of recreational opportunities for Canberra residents and visitors and has significant value for conservation, educational, scientific and aesthetic purposes.

Fire trails and specially constructed walking trails provide easy access across steep terrain and through dense vegetation. Two walking trails lead to the summits of Mount Ainslie and Mount Majura which provide expansive views of urban Canberra and surrounding rural land.

Walkers are not restricted to the trails described in this pamphlet. Shorter or longer walks can be planned by using any of the tracks marked on the accompanying map. However, please keep to existing tracks to avoid unnecessary trampling of soil and small plants. The time given for completion of each trail refers to a moderate walking pace. Allow extra time for rests taken.

Horse riding is permitted only on trails signposted for this purpose.

**HORSE TRAILS**

Horse trails have been established on Ainslie-Majura. One trail follows a route around Mount Majura while the other, on the lower, western slopes of Mount Ainslie, connects the horse paddocks at Hackett with those at Dunroon. The step-over log gates (cavalettis) allow access by horses and pedestrians but prevent entry by trail bikes. Two dams on the Mount Majura horse trail provide the only watering points on Ainslie-Majura.

The routes of the horse trails are marked with special posts and horse riders are asked to keep to the designated horse trails to avoid damaging vegetation and soil elsewhere on Ainslie-Majura.

**Kurrajongs** (*Brachychiton populneum*) were planted in 1915 as part of a revegetation program on Mount Majura.

The bluebell (*Wahlenbergia spp*) is a common plant of more open areas of Ainslie-Majura.

**WOODLAND TRAIL**

Length: 10 km
Time: 4-5 hours
Category: Moderate to difficult; steep in parts

The route of the woodland trail is not completely signposted although significant intersections are marked with red arrows.

Park your vehicle near the reservoir located on the eastern side of Mt Ainslie Drive, 1.0 km from the intersection with Fairbairn Avenue. Follow the fire trail that passes through a gate at the south-east corner of the reservoir and heads in an easterly direction. About 500 m from the gate the fire trail intersects a powerline running in a north-south direction. Turn left and follow the fire trail under the powerlines until a gate is reached 50 m from a T-intersection with the saddle road (about 40 minutes walking). Pass through the gate and turn left onto the Saddle road. Approximately 50 m from the T-intersection take the narrow uphill trail which leads to the right towards the Majura pine plantation.

**Hickory wattle** (*Acacia implexa*), a small tree with dense clusters of twisted seed pods.

As the pine plantation is approached, a reservoir will be seen to the left of the trail. Turn left at the reservoir and follow the grey gravel road that leads down to Mackenzie Street, Hackett. Approximately 500 m from the reservoir a large powerline crosses this road. Turn left and follow the powerline easement until it rejoins the Saddle road. Join the Mount Ainslie horse trail and return to Mt Ainslie Drive via the western slopes of Mount Ainslie.

**Everlasting daisy** (*Helenium spp*)

The eastern grey kangaroo (*Macropus giganteus*) is often seen in mobs of 5-10 on the eastern side of Mount Ainslie.

**MOUNT AINSLIE SUMMIT WALKING TRAIL**

Length: 1.7 km; (3.0 km via alternative route to quarry)
Time: 1-1½ hours down; 2 hours up
Category: Easy walking down; moderate walking up

This trail links the picnic area behind the Australian War Memorial and the lookout on the summit of Mount Ainslie. It is possible to start at either end of the trail. These notes describe the walk when commencing at the picnic area.

Within 300 m of the picnic area, the trail crosses two fire trails. An alternative route via a former quarry may be taken here by taking the second fire trail to the right and following this to the quarry. Rock from the quarry was used for road construction during the early development of Canberra. A walking trail leaves the quarry and rejoins the main walking trail further up Mount Ainslie. Allow approximately thirty minutes to visit the quarry.

The walking trail continues towards the summit and passes many old gnarled scribbly gum (*Eucalyptus rossii*) and red spotted gum (*E. mannifera subsp. macallosa*). Some trees have hollow limbs and trunks which provide shelter for mammals such as possums, sugar gliders and bats and nesting sites for many birds including rosellas, kookaburras and treecreepers. The twining plant, false sarsaparilla (*Hardenbergia violacea*) is common in this area.

False sarsaparilla (*Hardenbergia violacea*) has vivid purple flowers in spring.

The walking trail ascends a series of rock steps as it approaches the summit. To the left of these steps are large areas of volcanic rock covered in parts by mosses and lichens. These small plants contribute to the process of rock weathering to form soil.

Return to the Australian War Memorial via the same route.

**Kurrajongs** (*Hardenbergia violacea*)

The bluebell (*Wahlenbergia spp*) is a common plant of more open areas of Ainslie-Majura.
WOODLAND TRAIL

Length: 10 km
Time: 4-5 hours
Category: Moderate to difficult; steep in parts

The route of the woodland trail is not completely signposted although significant intersections are marked with red arrows.

Park your vehicle near the reservoir located on the eastern side of Mt Ainslie Drive, 1.0 km from the intersection with Fairbairn Avenue. Follow the fire trail that passes through a gate at the south-east corner of the reservoir and heads in an easterly direction. About 500 m from the gate the fire trail intersects a powerline running in a north-south direction. Turn left and follow the fire trail under the powerlines until a gate is reached 50 m from a T-intersection with the saddle road. Approximately 50 m from the T-intersection take the narrow uphill trail which leads to the right towards the Majura pine plantation.

Category: Moderate to difficult; steep in parts

Time: 4-5 hours

The eastern grey kangaroo (Macropus giganteus) is often seen in mobs of 5-10 on the eastern side of Mount Ainslie.

As the pine plantation is approached, a reservoir will be seen to the left of the trail. Turn left at the reservoir and follow the grey gravel road that leads down to Mackenzie Street, Hackett. Approximately 500 m from the reservoir a large powerline crosses this road. Turn left and follow the powerline easement until it rejoins the Saddle road. Join the Mount Ainslie horse trail and return to Mt Ainslie Drive via the western slopes of Mount Ainslie.

As the pine plantation is approached, a reservoir will be seen to the left of the trail. Turn left at the reservoir and follow the grey gravel road that leads down to Mackenzie Street, Hackett. Approximately 500 m from the reservoir a large powerline crosses this road. Turn left and follow the powerline easement until it rejoins the Saddle road. Join the Mount Ainslie horse trail and return to Mt Ainslie Drive via the western slopes of Mount Ainslie.

Hickory wattle (Acacia implexa), a small tree with dense clusters of twisted seed pods.

The misteltoe bird feeds on the fruit of the misteltoes. The seed, which has a sticky coat, is discarded onto a branch where it may germinate and so establish a new misteltoe plant.

The small red berries of the cherry ballart (Exocarpos cupressiformis) are edible and were probably eaten by the aborigines.

PLEASE REMEMBER

- To take your litter home and help the Department cut costs and reduce pollution.
- To leave all plants and animals undisturbed.
- To carry your own drinking water.
- Unauthorised vehicles and trail bikes are prohibited on Ainslie-Majura.
- Removal of rock, green or dead timber, leaf litter and soil is not permitted. Leave them for the next visitor to enjoy.
- Fires are permitted only in fireplaces constructed and maintained by the Department of the Capital Territory. If you see a bush fire please report its location as soon as possible to the ACT Bush Fire Council, phone 47 0470.
- Entry to the Radar Station (Department of Transport) on the summit of Mount Majura is prohibited.

For further information consult:

A Guide to Eucalypts in the ACT, Department of the Capital Territory.


(Also available at public libraries.)

or write to: ACT Conservation Service
Department of the Capital Territory
PO Box 158
CANBERRA DCY 2601
or phone: The Manager
Canberra Nature Park
46 2089

CASUARINA WALKING TRAIL

Length: 4.5 km (6.0 km via alternative route)
Time: 2-2½ hours
Category: Moderate

The Casuarina walking trail starts and finishes at the car park near the reservoir behind Rivett St, Hackett. These notes describe the trail when walked in a clockwise direction.

Initially the trail passes through the Hackett horse paddocks which enclose woodland remnants where the understorey of shrubs and grasses is depleted due to grazing by domestic animals.

The remaining trees are apple box (Eucalyptus bridgesiana), scribbly gum (E. rossii) and red spotted gum (E. mannifera subsp. macrocarpa) and many have misteltoes (Amyema penduliflora), a parasitic plant, hanging from them.

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The misteltoe bird feeds on the fruit of the misteltoes. The seed, which has a sticky coat, is discarded onto a branch where it may germinate and so establish a new misteltoe plant.

As the pine plantation is approached, a reservoir will be seen to the left of the trail. Turn left at the reservoir and follow the grey gravel road that leads down to Mackenzie Street, Hackett. Approximately 500 m from the reservoir a large powerline crosses this road. Turn left and follow the powerline easement until it rejoins the Saddle road. Join the Mount Ainslie horse trail and return to Mt Ainslie Drive via the western slopes of Mount Ainslie.

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Walking trail
Fire trail
Woodland trail
Horse trail
Transmission lines
Access
Gate
Parking
Cavaletti
Quarry
Dam
Reservoir
Pine plantation

Please note:
Fences are not shown

Cover drawing: White-winged choughs live in families of five to twelve birds and all members assist in constructing a mud nest and in feeding the nestlings. These black birds can be identified by their vivid red eyes, down-turned bill and white wing patches which are visible in flight.